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A N N U A L R E P O R T
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

PORT HEALTH DISTRICT
of
P R E S T O N.

For the Year 1950.

Port Health Administration.

PORT HEALTH DISTRICT.

The Port Health District of Preston extends from Formby Point on the south to a point about 2,350 yards south of Victoria Pier, South Shore, Blackpool, on the north. The dock, which is 3,200 feet long by 600 feet wide, covers 40 acres and is approached by the entrance basin, 850 feet long by 300 feet wide, which covers 4¼ acres.

The communicating locks are 550 feet long and 66 feet wide, with a depth of 29 feet 6 inches at high water ordinary spring tide. The docks are situated in the Borough, and are about 16 miles up the River Ribble from deep water at the bar.

The quays are 1½ miles long. There are 170 acres of storage ground and 37,489 superficial yards of covered floor space.

The dock is equipped with hydraulic and steam cranes, and has ample railway facilities.

The cattle lairage accommodates 800 cattle and 1,600 sheep or pigs.

(i) Amount of shipping entering the Port.

During the year under review two thousand, two hundred and twenty-nine ships, of which one hundred and thirty-three were foreign, entered the port. The details showing the tonnage, classification, etc., coastwise and foreign, and the method of propulsion, are given in the following table:-

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DETAILS OF SHIPS ENTERING THE PORT.

		Number	Tonnage	Number Inspected		Number reported to be defective	Number on which defects were remedied	Number of Vessels reported as having, or having had, Infectious Disease on board.
				By the Med. Officer of Health.	By the Sanitary Inspector.			
Foreign	Steamers ...	113	103374	1	113	49	33	-
	Motor ...	20	5166	-	20	12	8	-
	Sailing ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Fishing ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Foreign ...		133	108540	1	133	61	41	Nil.
Coastwise	Steamers ...	1801	786816	1	514	120	70	-
	Motor ...	295	87220	-	138	31	10	-
	Sailing ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Fishing ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Coastwise...		2096	874036	1	652	151	80	Nil.
Total Foreign and Coastwise ...		2229	982576	2	785	212	121	Nil.

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(ii) Character of Trade of Port.

(a) Passenger Traffic.

Whilst Preston is not an Approved Port for the landing of passengers, during the year 8 British and 26 Alien passengers were landed. The British were mainly tourists making 'round trips' on vessels carrying esparto grass from North African ports and they were all medically examined by the Medical Officer of Health before being permitted to land. The Aliens were students from the continent who were proceeding to England for educational purposes.

(b) Cargo Traffic.

The principal imports are cement, cattle, coal, cork, iron and steel, motor spirit, potatoes, potash and phosphate, pit props, timber, stone chippings, wood pulp, esparto grass, grain, oil seeds, china clay, vehicles and general cargoes, The principal exports are coal and coke, pitch, tar, machinery, vehicles, petrol, bitumen, oils, scrap iron and bricks.

(c) Foreign Ports from which vessels arrived.

Vessels carrying the above-mentioned imports arrived chiefly from the following foreign ports:- Arzew, Arendal, Antwerp, Bremen, Bergen, Bordeaux, Cuxhaven, Copenhagen, Drammen, Friedrichstadt, Furusund, Fredrikshamn, Gothenburg, Gefle, Gdynia, Halmstad, Hamburg, Helsingborg, Helsingfors, Kemi, Karlstad, Kotka, Karlshamn, Kalmar, Leningrad, La Palisse, Larvik, Lulea, Lovisa, Marseilles, Norrkoping, Oslo, Oran, Paris, Raumo, Rostock, Sundsvall, Sfax, Skelleftea, Stockholm, Trondheim, Valvick, Vestervik, Warnemunde.

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(iii) Water Supply.

(a) Source of Supply.

The Port derives its water from the town's supply, which is an upland surface water of good quality and well suited for drinking and domestic purposes. Vessels are supplied from the above source.

(b) Hydrants and Hosepipes.

Hydrants are situated at numerous points in the quay sides and hosepipes are connected to them for supplying ships with water. Stand pipes and hoses are stored in suitable accommodation to avoid contamination when not in use. They are also cleansed by allowing the first supply of water to run to waste.

(c) Water Boats.

Water Boats are not used at the Port.

(iv) Port Health Regulations, 1933 and 1945.

(1) Arrangements for dealing with Declarations of Health.

H.M. Customs (Waterguard Service) are kept supplied with Declarations of Health for use of their Boarding Officers. These forms are supplied to masters of ships on arrival at the Port and it is usual to leave a blank copy for use by the master on a subsequent voyage. The Declarations of Health collected by the Customs Officers are obtained from the Waterguard Office by the Port Sanitary Inspector.

In cases where vessels have sickness on board or have come from 'infected ports' the Declarations of Health are left on board for the Medical Officer's examination and a record thereof made in a book kept by the Customs.

(2) Boarding of Vessels on arrival.

All vessels were boarded by the Port Sanitary Inspector and some, including all foreign ships coming from 'infected areas', by the Medical Officer of Health. Ships coming from areas other than those included in the Infected Area List are not visited by the Medical Officer of Health unless the Customs Officer reports an unclean Declaration of Health.

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As a result of these inspections no cases of infectious disease were discovered on any vessel arriving in the Port during the whole year.

(3) Notification to the Authority of inward vessels requiring special attention.

H.M. Customs and the Pilots are in touch with shipbrokers, who have wireless and other information as to probable time of arrival. The Barge Repair Depot in the river, just below Lytham, about 9½ miles from Preston, is in telephonic communication with H.M. Customs and the Pilots.

(4) Mooring Stations designated under Article 10.

(a) The mooring place for 'infected' or 'suspected' ships is one of the mooring buoys in the centre of the Albert Edward Dock; all other unhealthy ships are 'breasted off' at the place of mooring, discharge or loading.

(b) There is no mooring station outside the docks.

(5) Particulars of any standing exemption.

A standing exemption from detention under Article 14 is granted in respect of ships with infectious disease other than cholera, plague, yellow fever and smallpox on board, and ships otherwise clean arriving from ports listed under Article 11.

(6) Experience of working of Article 16.

Warnings have at times had to be given to a few persons displaying undue anxiety to get on board before ships had been cleared.

The Customs Officer notifies the Master when boarding that no person is to board or leave the vessel until it is released under the Regulations.

(7) Arrangements made for:-

(a) Premises and waiting rooms for medical examination: No special arrangements have been made: but facilities can be made available at Dock Offices should occasion arise.

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(7) Arrangements made for (cont'd) ...

(b) Cleansing and disinfection of ships, persons and clothing and other articles: Quarters are disinfested by fumigation with HCN gas by arrangement with outside commercial firms if necessary; local fumigation by sulphur dioxide and DDT in suitable cases is carried out by the Port Sanitary Inspector. Infested and infected bedding and clothing are removed by van to the Corporation Disinfecting Station, Argyll Road, Preston. Cleansing of persons is also carried out at the disinfecting station.

(c) Premises required for the temporary accommodation of persons for the purpose of the Regulations: None.

(d) Hospital accommodation available for plague, cholera, yellow fever, smallpox and other infectious diseases: Cases of infectious disease are removed to the local Isolation Hospital. Smallpox is dealt with under arrangements made with the Regional Hospital Board.

(e) Ambulance transport: Ambulance facilities are provided by the Corporation Ambulance Service.

(f) Supervision of Contacts: Contacts will be kept under observation or surveillance by the Medical Officer of Health.

(8) Arrangements for bacteriological or pathological examination of rats for plague.

Examinations are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory, Preston Royal Infirmary.

(9) Arrangements for other bacteriological or pathological examinations.

Similar arrangements as above had been made for other examinations.

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(10) Arrangements for diagnosis and treatment of venereal disease among sailors under International arrangement.

Enquiries as to the existence of venereal disease are made by the Port Sanitary Inspector. Leaflets and posters, printed in English, Norwegian and Swedish, are distributed and displayed. Treatment, free of cost, is provided at the Preston Royal Infirmary.

(11) Arrangements for the interment of dead.

Arrangements for the interment of a deceased member of the crew of any vessel are left in the hands of the agent concerned.

(12) Cases of Infectious Sickness.

There was no notification received of a case of infectious sickness occurring on vessels during the voyage.

(v) Measures taken against Rodents.

(1) Steps taken for the detection of rodent plague.

(a) In ships in the Port: Enquiries are made by the Port Sanitary Inspector as to mortality among rats on all incoming vessels, and any undue mortality among rats is reported to the Medical Officer of Health, who makes the necessary arrangements with the Laboratory of the Preston Royal Infirmary for bacteriological examination.

(b) On quays, wharves, warehouses, etc., in the vicinity of the Port: Daily observation is made by the rodent operator, and in the case of any undue mortality similar steps to those detailed above are taken.

(2) Measures taken to prevent the passage of rats between ships and the shore.

All ships from foreign ports, especially those from infected area ports, are required to place efficient rat-guards on all mooring ropes to prevent the passage of rats between ships and the shore. In the event of vessels not having the required equipment on board rat-guards are loaned on hire at a charge of sixpence per guard daily, and a charge of fourteen shillings is made in the case of each loss.

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(3) Methods of deratisation of:

(a) Ships: Ships are deratised mainly by traps, and this may be supplemented by fumigation by means of HCN gas or sulphur dioxide if necessary.

(b) Premises in the vicinity of the docks or quays:- These premises are subject to treatments laid down in official directives by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

(4) Measures taken for the detection of rat prevalence in ships and on shore.

A 'half-time' rodent operator is employed in Port Health work, and the following is a summary of the work during the year under review:

Number of properties with minor infestation	54
Number of properties with major infestation	26
Number of properties with mice infestation	4
Number of properties inspected	84
Number of inspections made	420
Number of notices served re infestations	Nil
Number of poison baits laid	5900
Number of poison baits consumed	1907
Number of rats found dead	1170
Number of traps set	1180
Number of rats caught by traps	259
Number of rats submitted to the P.R.I. Laboratory for pathological examination	6

(5) Rat-proofing.

(a) The major part of the ground floor space in the warehouses is constructed of concrete. Any possible source of entry found during routine visits to buildings is made sound immediately.

(b) No action has been taken to extend rat-proofing of ships or on shore.

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Rats destroyed during the year.

(1) On Vessels.

Class of rat	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total Number.
Black	18	13	-	-	24	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	110
Brown	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Nil
Other Species	9	2	-	-	5	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	44
Examined....	2	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Infected with Plague ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Nil

Included in the above are: Four vessels for breaking up by T. Ward and Co.

(2) In Docks, Quays, Wharves and Warehouses.

Class of rat	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total Number.
Black	56	35	61	36	25	28	35	26	28	35	40	36	441
Brown	71	45	36	51	43	50	49	53	43	60	55	35	591
Other Species	28	31	25	33	37	30	25	36	31	42	40	32	390
Examined....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Nil
Infected with Plague ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Nil

Measures of Rat Destruction on Plague 'infected' or 'suspected' vessels or vessels from Plague infected ports arriving in the Port during the year.

No such vessels arrived at the Port during the year. This port is not on the list of 'Authorised Ports' for the granting of Deratisation Certificates.

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(vi) Hygiene of Crews' Spaces.

Clasification of Nuisances.

Nationality of Vessel	Number inspected during the year	Defects of original construction	Structural defects through wear and tear	Dirt, vermin and other conditions prejudicial to health	Number of defects remedied
British ...	652	42	59	95	80
Other Nations	133	9	25	8	41

(vii) Food Inspection.

(1) Public Health (Imported Foods) Regulations, 1937, the Public Health (Imported Milk) Regulations, 1926, and the Public Health (Preservatives, etc., in Food) Regulations, 1925 to 1940.

During the year no action was taken under the above Regulations.

(2) Shell-Fish.

During the year the mussel beds, which are controlled under the Preston (Shell Fish) Regulations, 1923 were visited periodically by the Port Sanitary Inspector. The beds, which are situate in the Ribble Estuary, had for some time been over-picked and consequently were closed so as to encourage breeding.

(3) Number of Samples of Food examined by:-

(a) Bacteriologist.

Ten samples of cockles were taken from the cockle beds and six from retailers. Six samples were reported as satisfactory and ten as unsatisfactory.

(b) Analyst.

There were no samples submitted to the Analyst.

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(vii) Importation of Livestock from Ireland.

During the year 7,579 bovine animals were landed, in addition to 5 horses and 80 sheep. The veterinary inspection of all livestock arriving at the Port is carried out by an officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Seven emergency slaughters were carried out, five due to injuries and two to sickness. The lairage accommodates 800 cattle, and 1,600 sheep or pigs.

(viii) Canal Boats.

There are now no canal boats registered with this Authority.